Everything
You Always Wanted to Know
About the
Pink Shree
But were afraid to ask ...
By Beverly Pearl

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"The Pink Shree" is a mock documentary: a winsome allegory about the potential harms of taking animals out of their natural environment and trying to domesticate them. It also makes gentle fun of human nature.

The shree is an imaginary animal.

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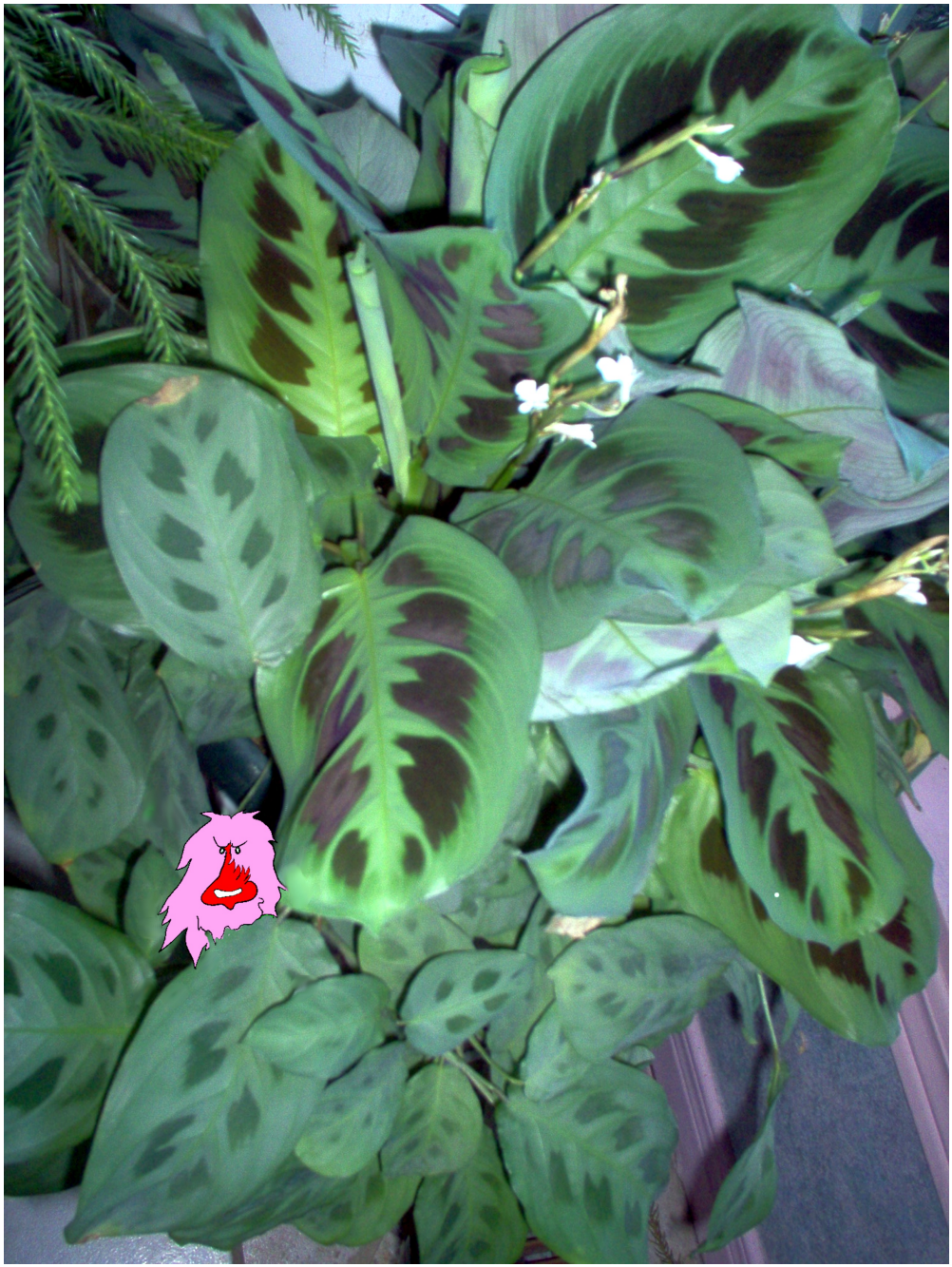
Contents

1. Shree Basics.....1
2. History of the Shree.....5
3. Shrees as Pets.....11
4. Shrees and the Economy.....25
5. Shrees and Science.....27
6. The Future of the Shree.....29



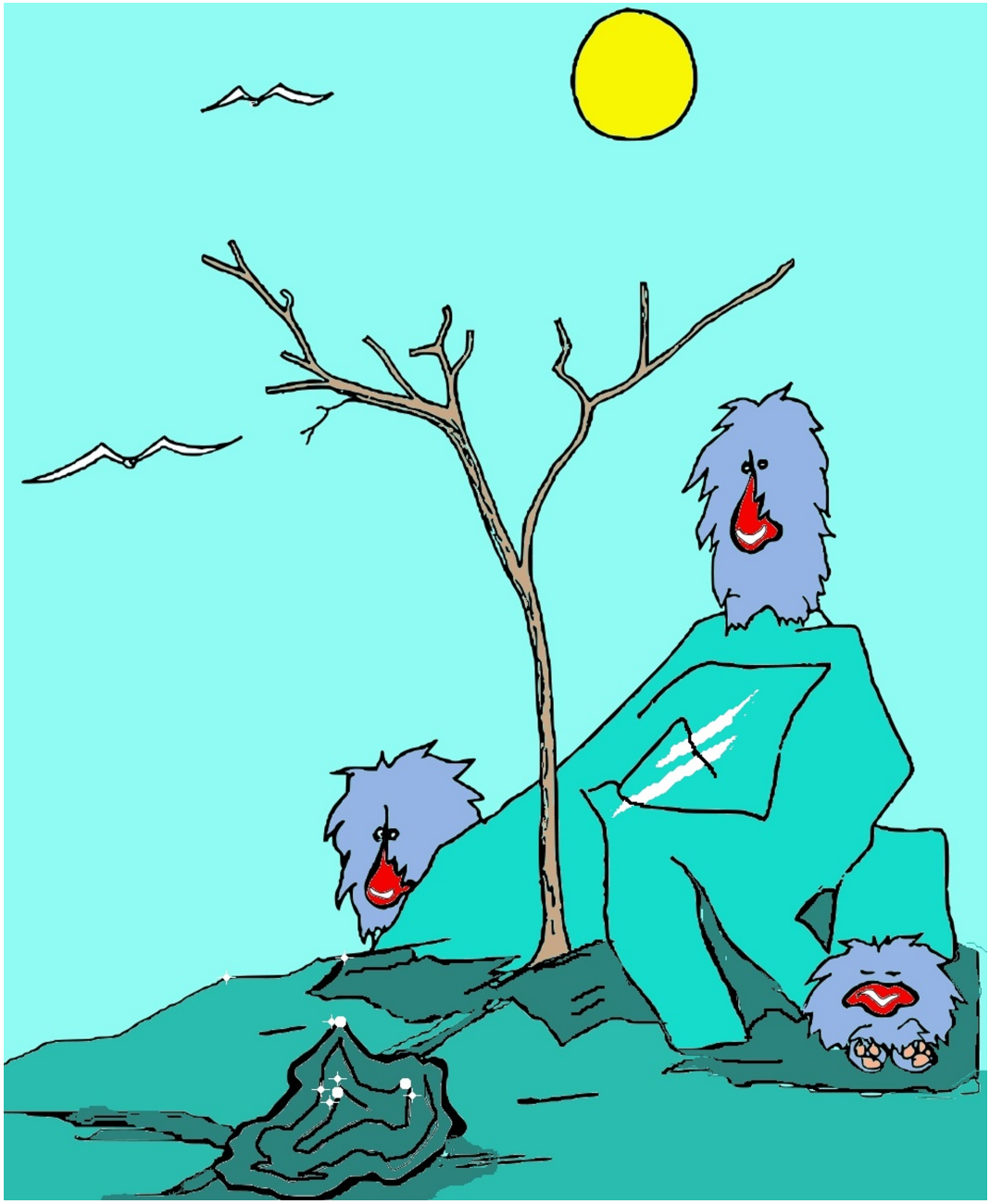
Chapter 1

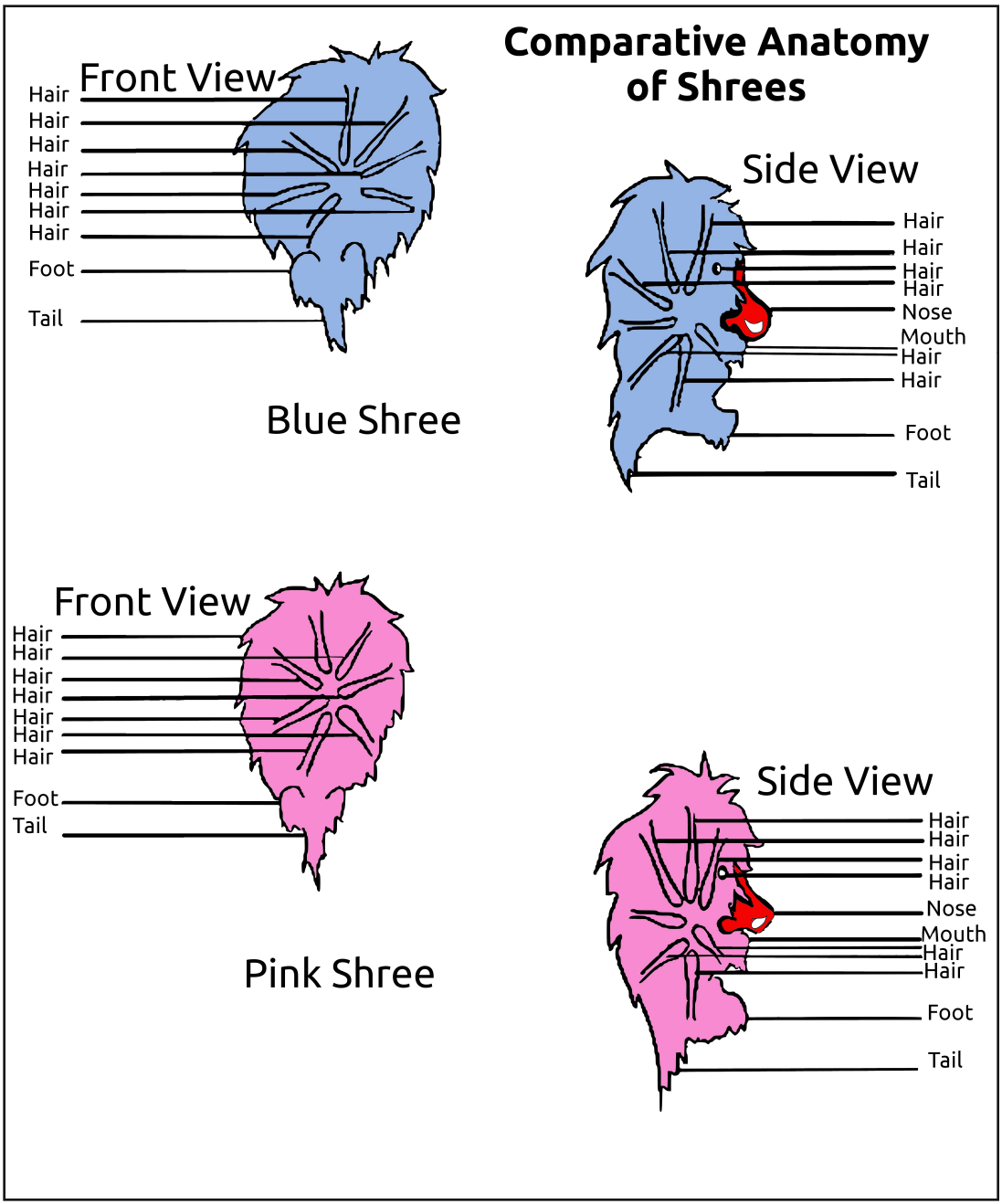
Shree Basics

The shree is very small.

There are two kinds of shrees. One is blue and one is pink. The blue ones live in Antarctica. The pink ones live further north. This book will tell you all about shrees.

We can't talk about the pink shree without first saying a few things about its cousin, the peaceful, common Antarctic blue shree.
The blue shree eats rocks and snow and likes other shrees. Otherwise, it is just like a pink shree. In fact, the pink shree is a direct descendent of the blue shree. Within 5 years of its arrival to a warmer climate, any shree will turn pink.
In the Antarctic, shrees might be eaten by birds.
As a rule, blue shrees are not adventurous creatures. They spend their days laying around among boulders and snow drifts. Though plentiful in the Antarctic, they are seldom seen. Some may accidentally catch an ice flow to somewhere that supports small trees and scrub. They usually go back home as soon as possible.




Comparative Anatomy of Shrees
Front View
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Foot
Tail
Blue Shree
Side View
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Nose
Mouth
Hair
Hair
Foot
Tail
Front View
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Foot
Tail
Pink Shree
Side View
Hair
Hair
Hair
Hair
Nose
Mouth
Hair
Hair
Foot
Tail

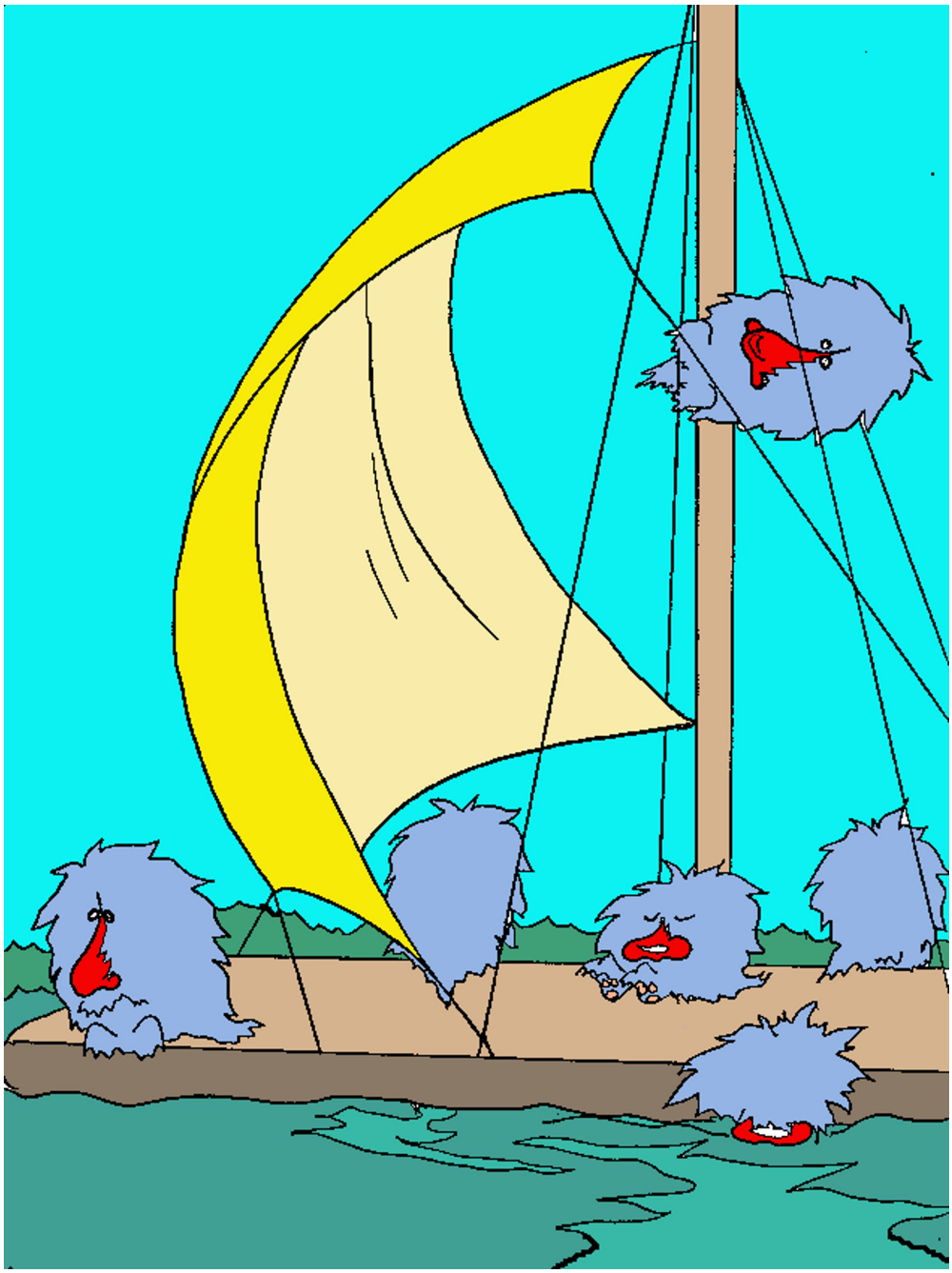
Chapter 2

The HIstory of the Shree

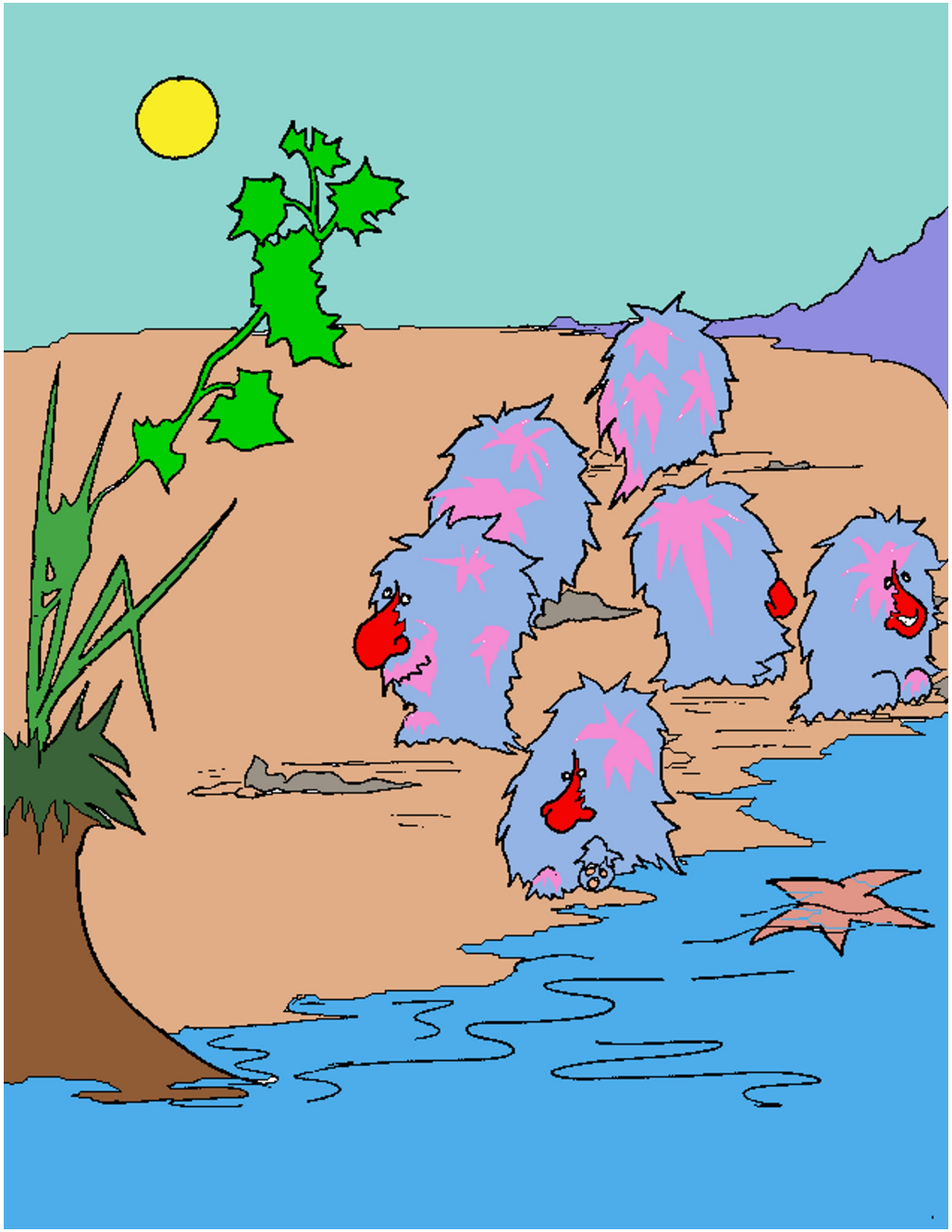
Many years ago, a handful of daring young shrees built a raft and set sail from Antarctica to seek their fortunes. Some scientists speculate that this strange behaviour might have been sparked by sun spots. Others suggest that excess radiation caused by the thinning ozone layer may have created genetic mutations in these shrees. Archeological evidence, limited to a few shree cliches scratched into Antarctic rocks in the sixties, indicates a possible shree renaissance. Among the findings were statements such as, "All roads lead to North.", "Go North, young shree, go north!" and "Vanity, thy name is shree."

With no fossil remains discovered to date, the true origins of the shree remain a mystery. The one sure thing is that from Antarctica every direction is north. This simplified navigation for the pioneering shrees but may have complicated their social lives. On Antarctica, shrees are so plentiful that they are bound to meet one-another eventually. Since even a shree can't tell one shree from another their society is very loosely held together.

It is not surprising, therefore, that on reaching land in the tropics our seafaring shrees wandered away from one another. They never saw each other again, or cared to.



In their new land, shrees soon learned to eat the ivy that grew in abundance. They forgot all about their past. With a full belly, a shree concerns itself with nothing and doesn't get lonely. Without Antarctic birds to eat them, shrees do not die. Without other shrees around they also forgot how to breed. Six pink shrees had been documented by 1975 when people started to take an interest in them.



Shrees have no natural enemies in northern countries.

Chapter 3

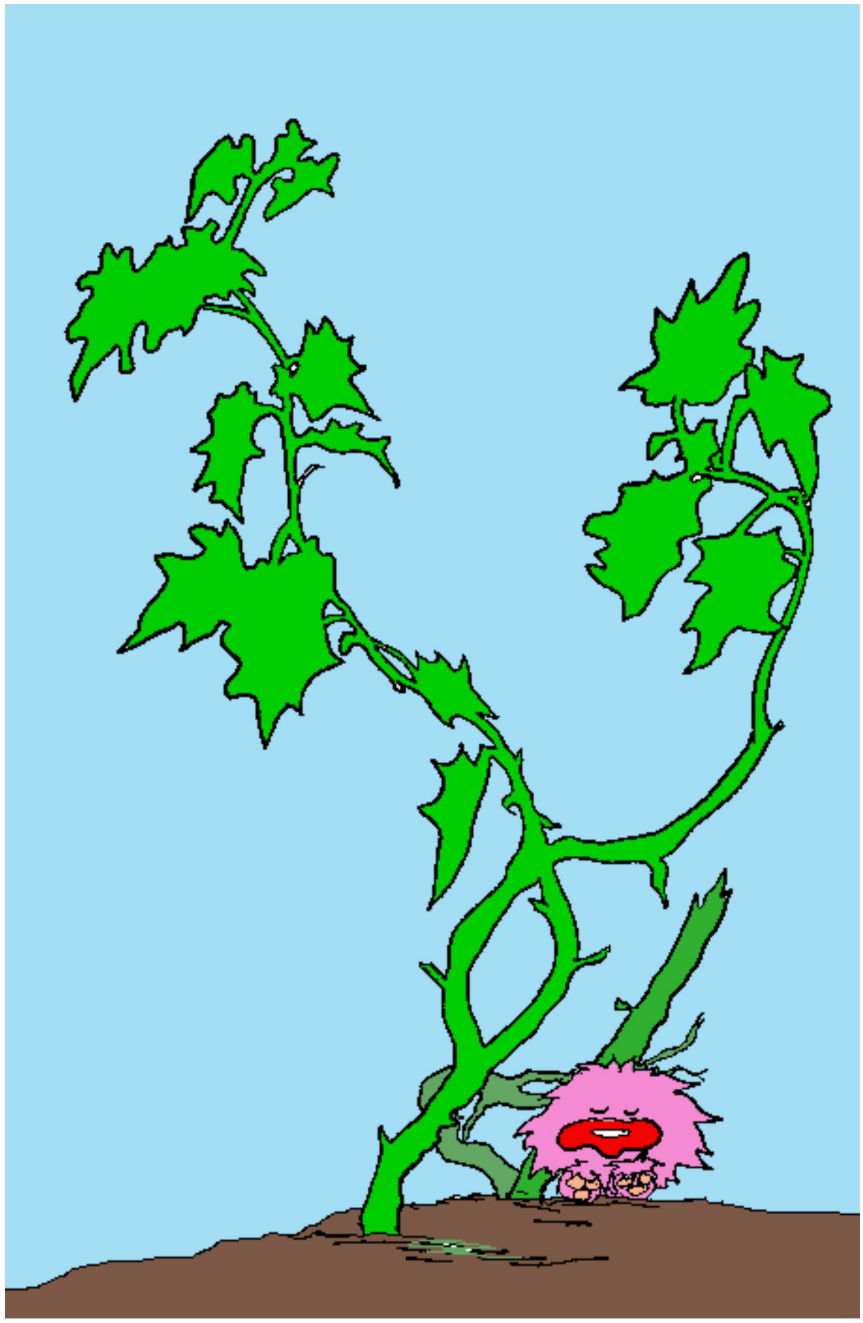
Shrees as Pets

A pink shree looks cuddly and cute but can be annoying in captivity. It prefers the philodendron as a perch, but eats only ivy.

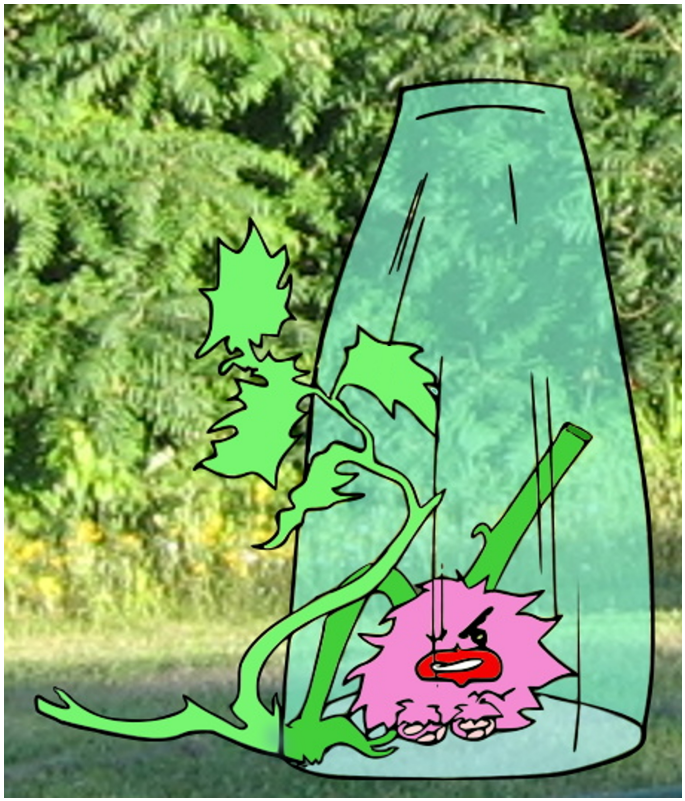
Immediately after a meal a shree always falls into a deep sleep. Usually very quick on its feet, a shree can easily be caught while napping.

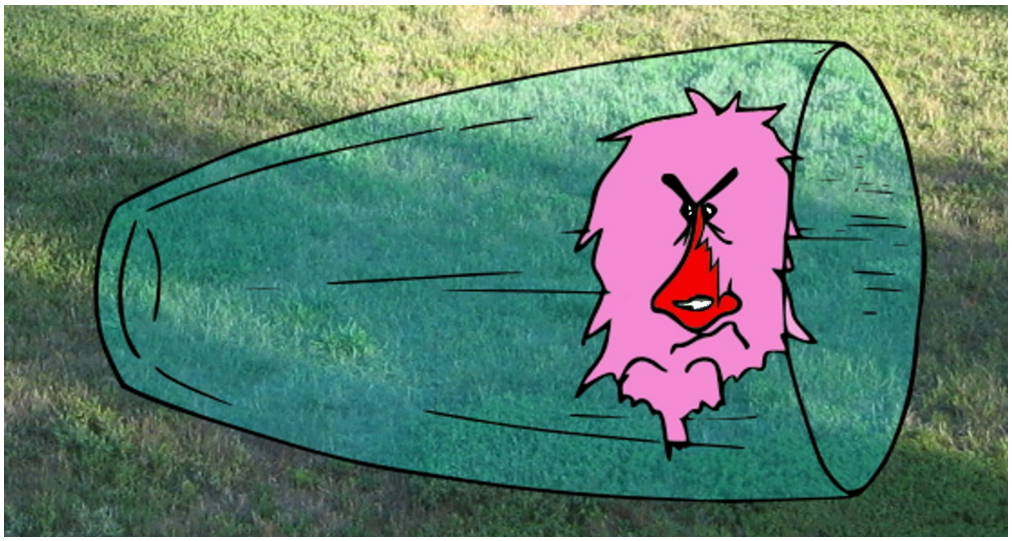
One day, a boy named Mark discovered a shree asleep under an ivy plant. He snuck up on it with a glass and caught it. Mark's friend, Nicky, was having a birthday that day. He thought a pet shree would make a great gift.

Most of what we know about shrees today was learned from this one.



Shrees wake up half at a time...

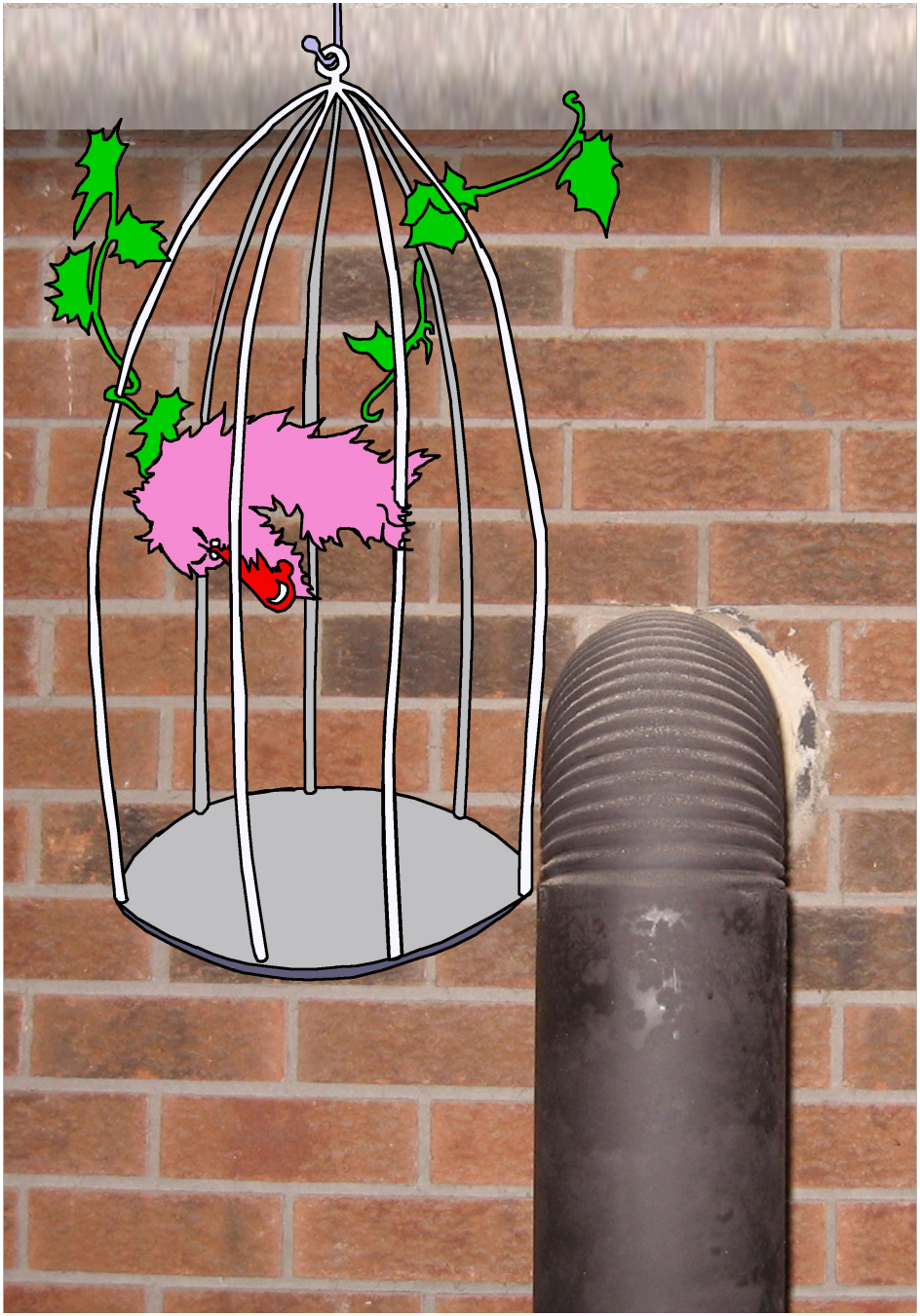




... and grouchy.

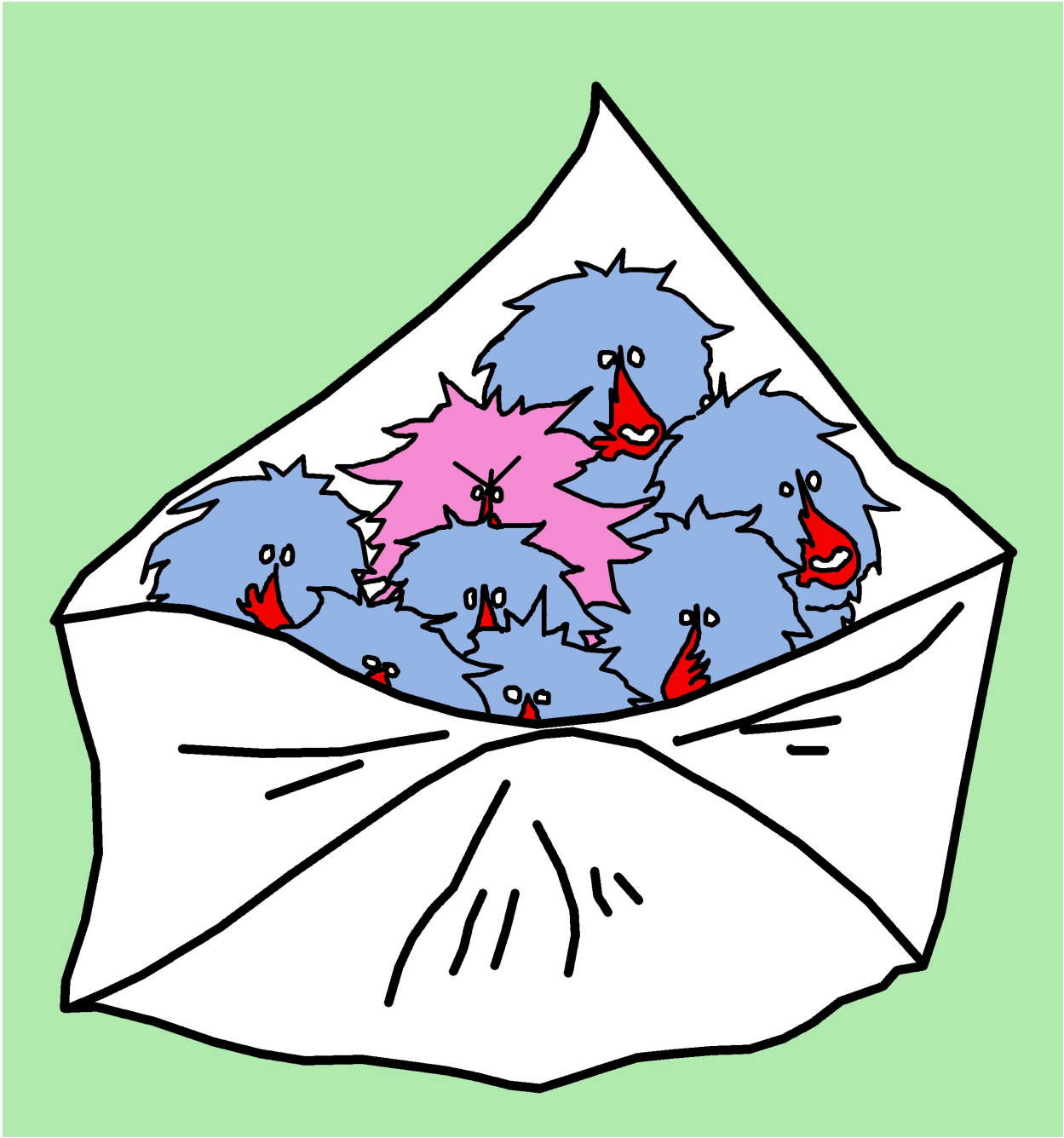
Nicky quickly set out to make his new pet comfortable. At first it seemed easy. He filled a wire cage with everything a shree could want and put in the shree. A shree has no arms or wings, but is very fast on its little feet. It can walk up the sides of things like plant stalks and walls. An unhappey shree, or one that is just being difficult, will stand sideways on the nearest vertical surface shouting insults at anyone who passes by. Mark and Nicky also learned that shrees wake up half at a time. One side wakes up and decides whether or not it is necessary for the whole shree to awaken. When the answer is yes, the shree is always grouchy.

Shrees can be as hard to keep as they are to catch. Even if they stay around, you probably won't know that they're there. If you want to know where your shree is, you will have to keep it in a cage.
A shree can be kept in any cage, even if the bars are far enough apart that it could walk out. All you have to do is hang it up so that the shree knows it's a cage. It won't think of walking up the bars, over the chain, across the ceiling to the wall and out the window. It will just stand on the side and yell at you.



A shree in captivity is very demanding.

If they do get away, shrees will hide on you. There are 7 Antarctic blue shrees and 1 pink shree hiding in this picture. Can you find them? (Answer on next page.)



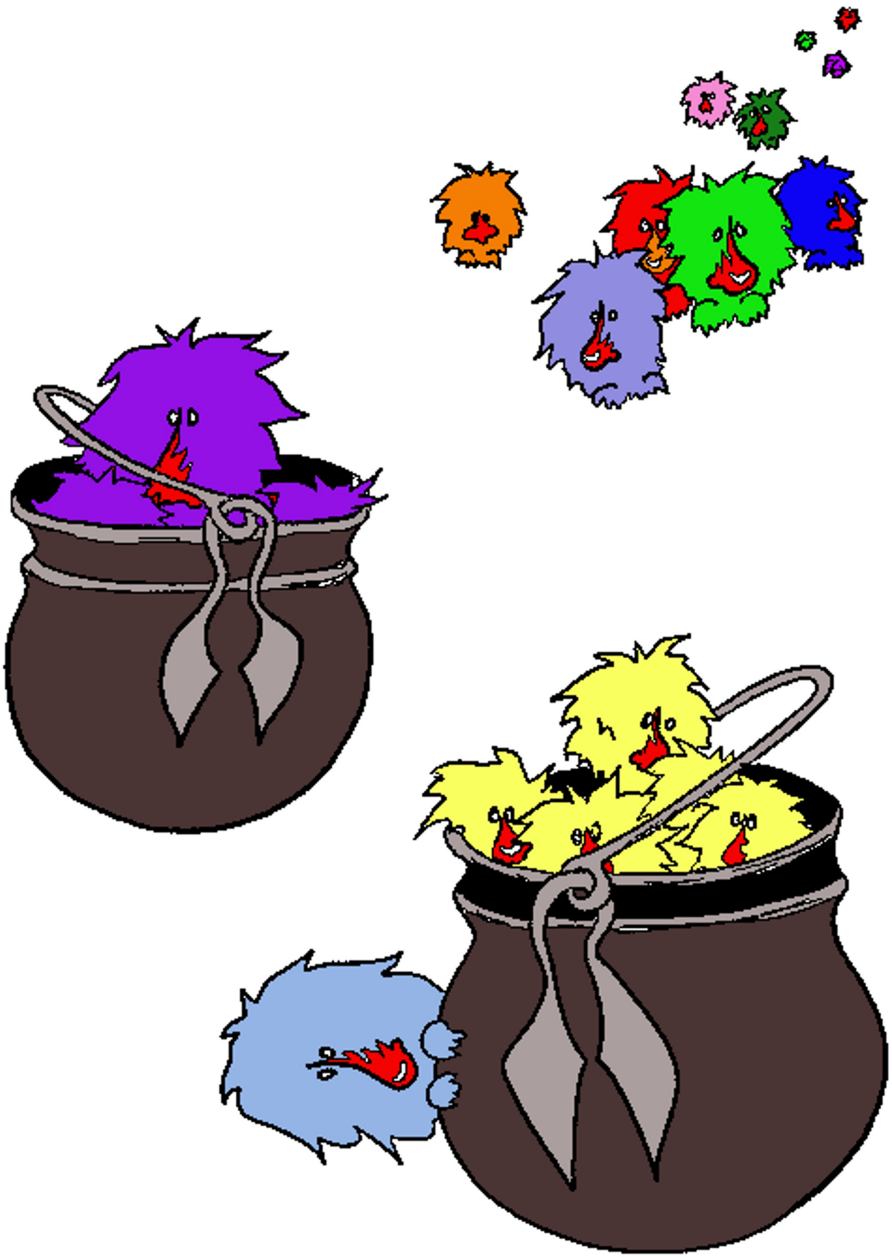
In another neighborhood, not far from Nicky and Mark, another pink shree was found. This time the owner of a pet store imported some blue shrees to go with it, and took out a big ad in the newspaper to try to sell them. By the time his store opened in the morning, all the shrees had hidden. All the ivy plants were gone. No one ever found the shrees, but local residents kept catching glimpses of pink and blue in their house plants.

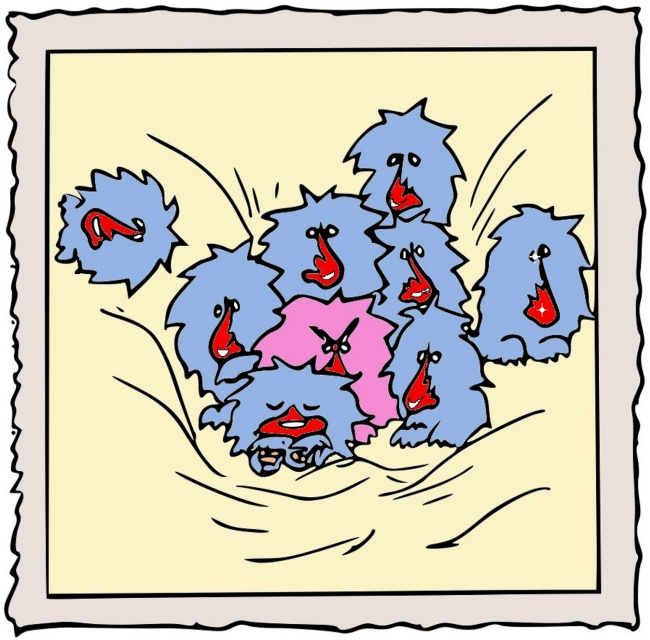
At last, tired of catering to its every wish, Nicky set his shree free. Later on, Mark found it. He thought it was a new shree and took it home with him. The first shree finder still had the first shree.

Chapter 4

Shrees and the Economy

Pink shrees proved so undesirable as pets that eventually blue shrees were imported from Antarctica. Their docility made them very endearing. Some ingenious business persons tried dying them for Easter and other special occasions, but the shrees' fur would fall out all over the place. Within a year all of the shrees were back to blue and slowly turning pink.





Karen S. Cromby, an enterprising businesswoman, claimed to have trained her shrees to hide. She traveled with several circusses for short periods of time. No one ever found her shrees. The act was a success, but she had to keep buying new shrees. Eventually she dropped the act as unprofitable.

Eventually Antarctic blue shrees were turning pink and breeding out of control. Everyone agreed that Antarctic blue shrees had to be kept in Antarctica, or they might upset the northern ecology. Besides, shrees had proved unprofitable even to collectors.

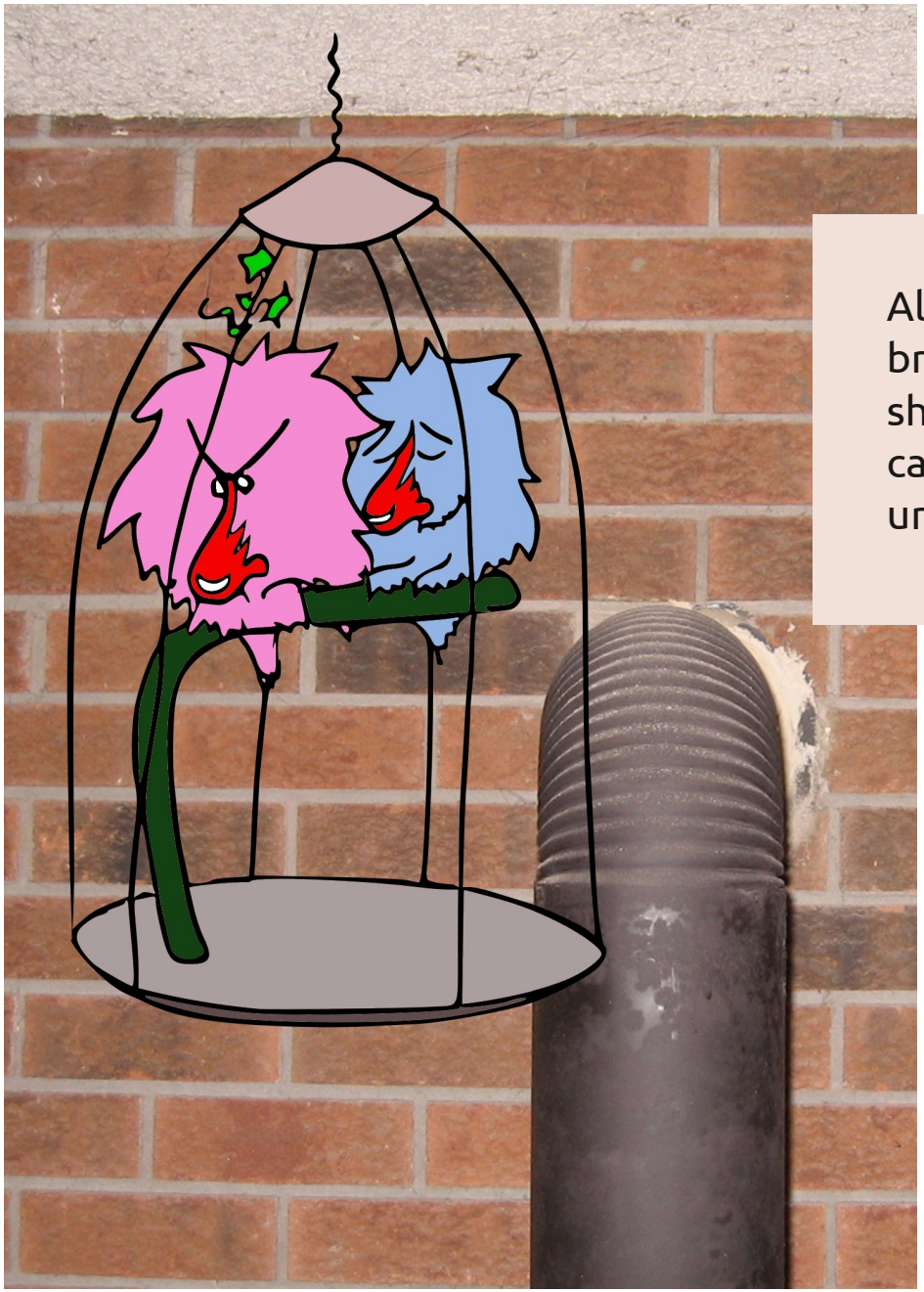
Chapter 5

Shrees and Science

By 1977 shrees had been outlawed from the north except for scientific research. Only a few remained outside their natural habitat.

Many politically correct experiments were performed in the name of science. For example, scientists tried to breed the only pink shree in captivity with blue ones fresh from Antarctica. They also introduced shrees to other animals and birds. All, save Antarctic birds, elicited little response. In time, even science saw no value in this animal and the last of the Antarctic blue shrees was sent home.

The only pink shree that stayed caught, besides Marks, was sent to a zoo to live out its never-ending life demanding ivy from the side of a cage designed to keep tourists out.



All attempts to breed pink shrees in captivity were unsuccessful.

Chapter 6

The Future of the Shree

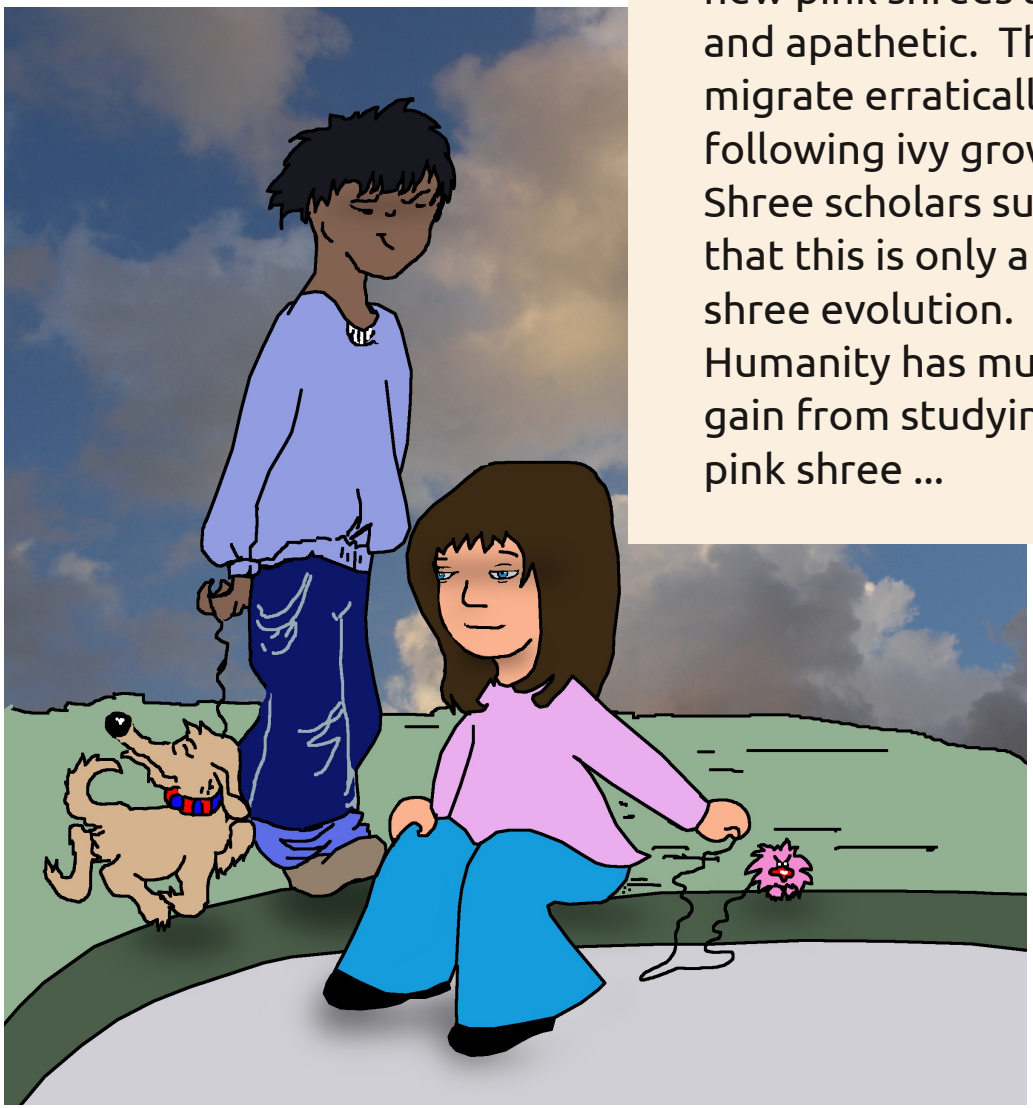
Mark still had his pink shree. He couldn't make it happy.

One beautiful, summer day he hung his shree-cage in a small apple tree to give his pet some air. When he wasn't looking, a mysterious, shree-eating butterfly appeared and carried it off.

... But our story has a happy ending ...

Somehow this shree lived and found other shrees. Pink shrees began to socialize with other shrees. What science couldn't accomplish in labs, and people couldn't accomplish through captivity, was happening in the wild.
Pink shrees have been seen traveling in little packs much further north than Antarctica, and there are way more than 6 of them.

According to science, the new pink shrees are lazy, and apathetic. They migrate erratically following ivy growths. Shree scholars suggest that this is only a stage in shree evolution. Humanity has much to gain from studying the pink shree ...



...or at least from observing it in the wild.

No shree was more than inconvenienced in the making of this book.

Beverly Pearl is an author and educator living in the Georgian Bay area of Ontario, Canada.

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The pink shree is a fictional animal that loves its freedom. It is harmless and cute, but very demanding in captivity. This book is full of colourful pictures and cute references to the human condition.

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